ESSAI DE BIBLIOGRAPHIE HIPPIQUE

BY

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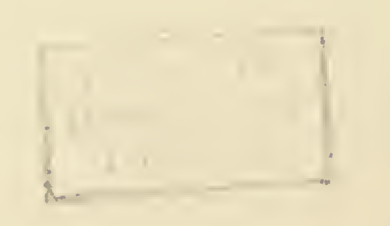
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ESSAI DE BIBLIOGRAPHIE HIPPIQUE.

Donnant la description détailée des ouvrages publiés ou traduits en Latin et en Français sur le Cheval et la Cavalerie, avec de nombreuses biographies d'auteurs hippiques; par le Général Mennessier de la Lance, ancien Commandant de la 3e division de cavalerie. Tome Premier A à K, Paris, 1915; Tome Second L à Z et supplément, Paris, 1917, Lucien Dorbon.

NOT naturally dry, bibliography is too often made so by faulty treatment. What more arid than long lists of titles, as dreary as the genealogies of the Old Testament, or as the catalogue of the ships in Homer! What more fascinating, on the other hand, than the story of the book as part of the life of the man who wrote it—the bio-bibliography! Such, for example, is the recent bibliography of Samuel Johnson, issued by the Oxford Press, from the pen of that master of the subject, the late William Prideaux Courtnay, which shows us, even better than does Boswell, the working ways of the great lexicographer. To be of value to the full-fed student of to-day a bibliography should be a *Catalogue raisonné*, with judicious remarks and explanations. In our great libraries this is impossible from lack of space, but the plan is followed with great advantage in the special bibliographies, of which the work before us is a model of its kind. Volume II., which has just appeared, completes this important contribution to the literature of the horse—for works in Latin and in French. We may congratulate the veteran general on finishing a task that has occupied his leisure for fifteen years. As it is a bio-bibliography, we turned at once to the author's name, opposite which is only one small report on a Cavalry Conference in 1892, to find that he was born in 1835, made Sub-Lieutenant in 1856, Colonel in 1881, General of Division in 1895, member of the Committee on Cavalry, and put in

the reserve, in 1900. Then follows the briefest possible summary of what must have been a life full of action—nine campaigns in Algiers, the war of 1870, and a campaign in Tunis! Forty-six years of active service left him still deeply interested in the Army and, as he says, in the brave animal on whose back he had travelled so many thousands of miles. He decided to occupy his leisure in a study of the literature of the horse and of cavalry, in Latin and French, from the beginning of printing.

The subject-index in each volume gives an idea of the scope of the work: I quote only a few of the more important headings—Sales, Feeding, Archæology, Cavalry, Cavalcades, the History of the various Cavalry Regiments, Equitation, Training, Horse Shows, Breeds and Breeding, Stud-books, Remounts, Hippologie, Hippophagie, Hygiene, Jurisprudence, Veterinary Medicine, Palæontology, Horse-posts, Protection and Compassion, and Iconographie.

A book-lover likes to put a new bibliography to the test, so I took from my shelves the famous *Veterinariæ Medicinæ*, Libri II. of Ruellius ("hippiatre et Médecin français"), 1530, to find an admirable description of this collection of Greek fragments translated by order of Francis I.; and then the *Hippiatrique* (Ιππιατρικα), in Greek, Basle, 1537, of which there is a much better account than I can find in any of my bibliographies, with a statement of the various other editions in French, Italian, Spanish, and German. The older authors in veterinary medicine are very fully described, and for purposes of bibliographical reference this part of the work will be indispensable. To mention a few of the more important: Comte Basta, 1550-1622; Beaugrand, whose *Mareschal Expert* (1619) held its own in France in scores of editions for 200 years, though, as our author says, a monument of ignorance, barbarism, and superstition; the *Hierozicon* of Samuel Bochart (1663), a learned Protestant minister, who disputed for nine days consecutively at Caen with a Jesuit; Bonacossa (1564); Boulengerus (1598); Camerarius, whose *Symbols and Emblems of Animals* appeared in 1595; Choul,

the writer on ancient cavalry (1555); Crescentius, the thirteenth-century author on *Rural Economy*, the various editions of which are traced from 1471; La Broue, writer of the first French work on equitation, 1593; the Duke of Newcastle, 1592-1676, a sketch of whose stirring life is given, and a full account of his great folio, *La Methode Nouvelle* and *Invention Extraordinaire de dresser les Chevaux*, 1657; Ruffo, in charge of the stables for the great Frederick II. (thirteenth century); Lando, whose *Regrets facétieux et plaisantes harangues funèbres sur le mort de divers animaux* (1st ed. 1548) must be good reading; and Solleynel, author of *Le Parfait Mareschal*, 1664. Eleven pages cover the "Traités sur l'Equitation et sur le Commandement de la Cavalerie of Xénophon"—*remarquable par la clarté de l'exposition et par la connaissance approfondie du sujet.*

Translations into the French of English authors are fully given, as the Earl of Pembroke's *Equitation*, and the works of Bracy Clark, Clater, Fleming, Flower, Bishop, Goodwin, Markham, Ryding, and Youatt.

The bibliography of the official regulations, decrees, ordinances, and regulations relating to the cavalry arm and to the breeding of horses should prove most useful.

An interesting section deals with the Carrousels and Cavalcades of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in which the horse played so important a part. The painters and sculptors of the horse are fully described and their chief works cited. Some of the biographies are of special interest, as of Claude Bourgelet (1712-1779), founder of the first veterinary schools, at Lyons, 1762, and later at Alfort; of Decroix (1821-1901), the introducer of hippophagy into France; and of Eugene Gayot, who originated the Anglo-Norman breed of horses.

Eugène Sue, the famous novelist, whose career as a doctor I had forgotten, figures as the author of *Deleytar* (1837), a set of stories, one of which is concerned with the exploits of the celebrated stallion Godolphin—Arabian.

The picture given in these volumes of the life and

literature of our French brethren is very stimulating. The importance of the subject of equitation and training, and the various systems are illustrated by the lives and works of Baucher, Aure, and others. In the bibliographical notes the complete story of the French veterinary profession may be read. The impression is left that this branch of our science is on a very high plane on the other side of the Channel. Doubtless the active Government support has contributed not a little to raise its intellectual and social status. The position in science reached by such masters as Bouley and Chauveau cannot be matched outside of France. No veterinary surgeon has as yet been President of the Royal Society, and no Veterinary Professor a President of the Royal College of Surgeons or of the Royal College of Physicians.

Students of the horse in all its relations owe a deep debt of gratitude to General Mennessier de la Lance for this comprehensive and valuable work, so full of accurate and careful scholarship. As a former teacher in a Veterinary College I may be permitted to offer him on behalf of the profession in Great Britain our congratulations on its completion, and our heartfelt wishes that he may be spared to see final victory crown the Army of which he has been so distinguished a member.

WILLIAM OSLER.

